Work on Agartala-Sabroom Rail Line

1780. SHRI KHAGEN DAS: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Railways propose to take up work on Agartala-Sabroom rail line in Tripura as Traffic-Cum-Engineering survey has been completed; and

(b) if so, what are the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH): (a) and (b) The survey is in progress. Further consideration of the project would be possible once the survey report becomes available.

Fall in Freight Revenue

1781. SHRIMATI CHANDRESH KUMARI:
MISS MABEL REBELLO:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that fall in freight revenue and increase in pension outgo has put Railways into a financial crises; and

(b) what are the details of the freight revenue for the last two years and also pensions outgo for the last two years?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH): (a) Yes, Sir. In 1998-99, due to recessionary trend in economy, the Railways could move only 420.92 mt as against a target of 450 mt of freight traffic. Consequently freight earnings fell short of target by Rs. 1726 cr. This has lowered the base for both freight traffic and earnings. In the current year, taking into account incremental freight traffic, the target is placed at the same level as the last year, viz. 450 mt. Though this is expected to be achieved, change in traffic mix and lead may result in a shortfall in earnings of Rs. 250 cr, as compared to the target. As regards pension, from a level of Rs. 3509 cr. in 1997-98, the outgo was Rs. 4144 cr. in 1998-99 and is expected to be around